JF
851
.A4

Ackermann, Jessie, F.R.S.G.S.

What Women Have Done with the Vote.

C New York, 1913

JF 851
.A4
Copy 1

ıat Women Have Done With the Vote

By

JESSIE ACKERMANN, F. R. S. G. S.

Jessie Ackermann

What Women Have Done With the Vote

BY

JESSIE ACKERMANN, F.R.S.G.S.

WILLIAM B. FEAKINS
PUBLISHER
19 West 44th St., New York

J F851
.A4

Copyright, 1913, by
JESSIE ACKERMANN

B. 75
©Cl.A357379
201

Press of Ferris
Philadelp

DEDICATED

TO

ALL WOMEN IN ALL LANDS WHO ARE HELPING TO
MAKE THE WORLD BETTER FOR MEN,
WIDER FOR WOMEN, AND PURER FOR CHILDREN.

Jessie Ackermann.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I	How the Women of New Zealand got the Franchise	7
CHAPTER II	The Result of the Franchise in New Zealand	14
CHAPTER III	How the Women of Australia got the Franchise	21
CHAPTER IV	Women of Australia as Citizens	28
CHAPTER V	Some Laws Relating to Women and Children in Australia	40
CHAPTER VI	Suffrage as Related to the Birth-rate in Australia	48
CHAPTER VII	Aims of Australian Women Citizens	58
CHAPTER VIII	The Woman's Vote in Finland	63
CHAPTER IX	Women Citizens at Work in Norway	74
CHAPTER X	How the Women of China Became Citizens	78

INTRODUCTION

IN view of the woman question being a live issue, demanding settlement in practically every country of the world, I resolved to visit those lands where women are fully enfranchised, to study the results of this new factor in National life and learn if there had been a decline in the domestic interests and influence of woman in the home.

In pursuit of these objects I spent twenty-two months in Australia and New Zealand studying the situation in these Southlands, while China, Finland and Scandinavia, in all of which places women enjoy citizenship, afforded daily illustrations of the practical operation of women as citizens.

The following pages form a short record of my observations while living, as I usually did, in the homes of the people of varied stations of life.

I have tried to take an impartial view of the interesting situation and briefly set forth my conclusions for the benefit of any who may wish to become familiar with facts, gathered first-hand at short range.

Having been in close touch with every phase of the franchise movement, both as to the efforts in securing citizenship and also the results of the practical operation of women in politics, I may claim to be in a position to set forth the true situation as it obtains in these lands.

JESSIE ACKERMANN.

July, 1913.

CHAPTER I.

How the Women of New Zealand Got the Franchise.

IT is not my purpose to enter upon a discussion of the justice of extending citizenship to women. This is now accepted by leaders of thought among both men and women.

I shall confine what I have to say to observations and research made during residence of shorter or longer periods in those lands where women now enjoy the rights of citizenship, beginning with New Zealand.

Upon my first visit to New Zealand, now somewhat over twenty years ago, the women were beginning, only beginning, to feel what enfranchisement would mean in the building of a new country. It must first be observed that conditions were more favorable to innovations in this new and democratic land than in the old world from which the early settlers came. The vastness of possibility was conducive to experimental legislation. The very setting demanded a new social order and a departure from beaten lines. In New Zealand the struggle for woman suffrage did not involve the overcoming of obstacles that similar movements in the old world would mean. The younger generation, as well as a following of the older school, discerned in their new setting a fitting opportunity for proposed changes. Truly the spirit of prophecy must have settled upon them!

BEGINNINGS.

The suffrage movement was introduced into New Zealand by an English lady whose conservative husband was bitterly and fiercely opposed to the principle. To avoid an open clash in the home and carry out a mission which was born into her very soul as one of righteousness, it became necessary for this good woman to carry on the work of agitation and propaganda unknown to her husband, who held a very high position in both city and district affairs. This dates back to 1850.

So new was the mere suggestion of women having the vote that leading men listened to Mrs. Muller's arguments with barely courteous apathy, while others quoted Scripture, dug up St. Paul, and were truly shocked at "so scandalous a suggestion." This was no idle pose on the part of the men. They were quite sincere in their views concerning the impropriety of women "careering around in the political arena" and entering the realm of extended thought. The situation is so familiar, I need not dwell at length upon the objections raised. These were from the conservative element who really felt that the highest interests of the home were at stake as well as the ideal standard of womanhood.

There was also the opposition born of a downright fear of the influence of women in this new center of action, while others could foresee the doom of evil-doers, who depended upon the sanction of the law to carry out their oppression or greed for gain. In short, the advent of women into national life would mean clean politics, an unthinkable factor on the part of men with selfish aims to accomplish.

In the early stages of the agitation, legislators regarded the movement as quite harmless, and it was unnecessary to take a party stand on the matter. Mrs. Muller was aided in her anonymous propaganda by the editor of a leading newspaper, who not only lent his columns freely to set forth arguments in favor of woman suffrage, but arranged for the publication of her articles in remote parts of the Colony, and brought out her pamphlet, entitled "An Appeal to the Men of New Zealand," for free circulation.

Twenty-seven years later an advocate of the cause introduced a resolution into the New Zealand Parliament to the effect that "electoral disabilities of women should be removed in the name of the rights of the whole of the people and of unborn millions."

Then followed the usual parliamentary tactics for which wise and learned men are noted. Year after year "women, lunatics, and convicts" remained beyond the pale of the Constitution. These classes alike were wholly dependent upon male relatives to secure for them legal redress from wrong or oppression. But all thinking women know what that means. In my mother's day the women of some of the States did not own their own clothes—that is, after they were married. A woman took a man's name, and he took her clothes and all other possessions.

PROGRESS.

The progress of the cause between the years 1850 and 1885 was slow, but still advancement was made. In the latter year the Woman's Christian Temperance Union was organized in several towns and cities of New Zealand, and the following year a convention of

delegates from these local societies was held in Wellington, when a Central Union was formed which should cover the whole colony—New Zealand was then a colony.

Among the departments for which a general superintendent for the entire colony was appointed was one known as the Department of Franchise. A most happy selection was made in the appointment of Mrs. Shepherd as head of that department for all New Zealand. To her splendid ability and unceasing efforts a large measure of success was due. Through abuse, often personal, and good cheer, through defeat and discouragements thick and dark enough to exterminate the fires of enthusiasm, the flames of zeal ever burst anew, and effort was never allowed to flag. The first petition met the usual fate of the prayer of the disfranchised. Another effort was made. Petitions were again circulated. This became one of the regular methods of agitation, and a fine one it was for creating public sentiment and extending general education upon the subject. With the return of each petition year by year the signatures were increased nearly one hundred per cent., which meant that enlightenment upon the subject was spreading and a keener interest was being awakened.

About the time when greatest activity was necessary I reached New Zealand on my first trip around the world. Familiar as I was with the unsympathetic treatment of some of the pioneer women of America, I marvelled at the determination of a mere handful of women, and fewer men, to push the reform to a successful issue. They bombarded every citadel of conservatism. With unhallowed feet they rushed into the

sacred precincts of synods, assemblies, and unions of various church bodies, some of which publicly proclaimed the scandal of such proceedings. Conservatism upon the position of women was certainly very great.

In the course of events, however, franchise societies were formed, the membership including men as well as women. Meantime the personnel of Parliament changed. Two most widely-known and highly-respected men, representing opposite political views, whose influence was probably greater than that of any other two men in the Colony, and who were ardent supporters of the cause, took their seats. This was fortunate, for it removed the issue from party politics. There were about as many members in favor of the issue upon one side of the House as on the other.

VICTORY.

The year of my visit chanced to be one of the greatest possible activity of the franchise department. The classification of women with "lunatics and convicts" was brought out in a most striking manner. The fact that a convict just out of prison enjoyed the privileges of full citizenship the moment he was free, while the woman who had worked and supported his children during his sentence was a political outcast and must live under any kind of laws enacted by men who held their seats by the aid of criminal electors, was a powerful argument. It made a great impression, and a sense of injustice took deep root.

When the bill came up at last, with full hope of passing, the opposition speeches grew more and more violent and less and less logical. In desperation one

of the members fell back upon the last refuge of an opponent at bay—the misinterpretation of Scripture. He rated every supporter of the bill as an enemy to the Almighty, trying to take women out of the place where God intended them to be. But public sentiment, with the force of an exploding bombshell, was against him.

The Lower House, partly to save the face of the members and partly because it was worn out by the subject, agreed to pass the bill, depending—unavailingly—upon the Upper House to defeat it. Some fertile brain devised the idea of an amendment which was regarded as a certain means of defeat to the bill. This was to the effect that women were also to be eligible to seats in Parliament, but it was lost. At the final reading in the Upper House, the measure was carried by the small majority of two votes—but it was carried.

Seizing upon the last straw, the minority joined forces with the brewers, publicans, and other sinners in a petition to the Governor to withhold his signature from the bill. Following this the superintendent of the Franchise Department wrote to the Governor on behalf of one-third of the women in the Colony calling attention to the errors of statement—to put it mildly—contained in the minority petition. She also asked the country unions, as well as individual members, to telegraph to the Governor. The result may be imagined—it is enough to record final victory.

Mr. Seddon (the Premier), who blemished his otherwise brilliant career as a statesman by opposing the bill, sent the following telegram to Mrs. Shepherd: "The Electoral Bill assented to by his Excellency the Governor at a quarter to twelve this day." Thus, in

September, 1893, sixteen years after the introduction of the first bill, the enfranchisement of every adult woman in New Zealand was achieved.

It is not wide of the truth to say that to thousands of women of New Zealand citizenship came as the realization of the highest ideals of national life, and that it would leave an imprint upon every phase of human existence. Having created a demand for the power of the vote the sense of duty and obligations of citizenship followed. Women took to voting as naturally, calmly, and normally as they did to eating breakfast or washing dishes. They wanted the vote, and they used it.

This is the secret of the success of the woman citizen in New Zealand. The vote was not thrust upon them by any party in order to make use of them to promote political and party measures. An earnest, wholesome desire to make the influence of women felt in national life prompted them to work, and work hard, to secure the privilege.

CHAPTER II.

The Result of the Franchise in New Zealand.

IT is now twenty years since the women of New Zealand entered upon the duties of citizenship. All legislation in advance of public opinion carries neither duty nor conviction with it, and soon becomes a dead letter. More properly speaking, it remains a dead letter, never having possessed the vital spark of demand. There can be no sense of individual responsibility or duty relating to any movement until a majority of the people are at least interested.

In all places where women have truly desired citizenship, they have made wholesome use of it when granted. In other parts where *unscrupulous* men have made a political doormat of women, and walked over them to secure party measures, the vote in the hands of the women has not measured up to *Party* expectation. I am convinced that the highway to success is only through a mighty battle on the part of women. It is true that brave women must spend and be spent; they must give out in the struggle after using pen, voice, and means to cut their way through prejudice and rock-bound usages which have surrounded woman from the dawn of Time to the present moment. Just in proportion to the force of the fight, will an educated public sentiment impress the individual with a sense of responsibility which leads to the discharge of duty.

One of the impelling motives to claim citizenship for women in New Zealand was a firm belief that women

would in some effective way deal with the liquor traffic. It is a well-known fact, which may be stated without one being accused of trying to preach a temperance sermon, that women and children are the greatest sufferers from the curse of strong drink. As almost every home is more or less touched by the baneful influences of the public-house, women were eager to use their political influence in some way to curtail or suppress the evil.

What they have been able to do has been so grossly misrepresented by individuals, and representatives of the Press to whom the matter of suffrage does not appeal, that a few facts on the subject may throw a glimmer of light upon the disputed question of the value of woman's vote.

It was stated in one paper that there is more liquor consumed in no-license electorates where local option prevails (a 3/5 vote closes a public house) than under the old system. This needs no argument, for it is utterly absurd upon the face of it. If such a state of affairs really existed every brewer would try to secure a Temperance Alliance lecturer instead of spending vast sums to fight the influence of that society.

No one with any knowledge of the operation of the law prohibiting the sale of liquor in a given district would pretend to say that it is an absolute success. There are laws against murder and theft, but that does not prevent either of these crimes. What has most nearly suppressed these crimes has not been laws against them, but laws prohibiting the liquor traffic. So long as human nature is what it is: so long as greed for gain is the motive power of so much in human affairs, every law which attempts to regulate

or curtail the actions of men will be broken, and the law which pertains to the liquor traffic will prove no exception. The facts are that in New Zealand as a whole, including prohibitive districts, £3 13s. 1½d. per capita is annually spent on liquor, while in the prohibition electorates the amount is reduced to 16s. 3d. per capita.

Sixteen electorates out of seventy-six have voted liquor out, and this number would be greatly increased but for the fact that so large a majority is required in order to abolish established drinking places.

Concerning the attitude of women toward the no-license vote, which is taken during a general election, a leading paper says, "The University students and the women recorded their votes at the polls as never before. In eighteen electorates there was a larger percentage of women votes than of men."

In a recent paper I saw statements to the effect that crime had increased, the birth-rate decreased, and the infant mortality was a disgrace to the country, since women had been given the vote. I have before me the valuable statistics of the New Zealand year book, which gives official figures dealing in plain facts. Figures speak for themselves.

Take the birth-rate to begin with. Strange to say, there was a decided decrease before suffrage was granted. But in ten years after that event the increase registered 27.29 as compared with 24.20 in England, and during the same period the number of children of school age was so great that in one year alone, 1909, thirty-five public and one private schools were opened. The national increase is 18.07 per thousand, as against 12.13 in England and Wales.

The rate of infant mortality has decreased since women have had the suffrage, until now it is the lowest in the world, having decreased thirty to the 1,000.

In New Zealand the proportion of deaths of infants during their first year of life is 61.6, while in England and Wales the wee tots are swept off at the rate of one hundred and twenty to the 1,000, almost one hundred per cent. more.

It is difficult to trace the relation of any of these questions to the fact that women in New Zealand vote. Yet before me is a paper in which I see the statement made quite seriously that the franchise given to the women is the direct cause of increased crime, although there is no attempt to trace any logical, or illogical, for that matter, bearing upon suffrage.

These are the facts as set forth in the year book. Just mere *facts*. A curious feature of these criminal records is the statement and figures proving that so large a percentage of criminals hail from other parts. For instance, in a single year, of 3,159 persons sent to jail, 1,502, nearly fifty per cent., were from the United Kingdom. and forty-seven persons were from other English possessions. Sixty-eight per cent. of the population is made up of native-born New Zealanders, but of the whole number in jail only thirty-eight per cent. are native born.

In conversation with a number of thinking citizens of New Zealand I diligently inquired what might be the reason of the growing and improved conditions in their country. Without exception they declared that it was directly traceable to the great extent to which women exercised their citizenship in outlawing the

public house which was really the source of so much moral disorder; that under the normal conditions of a sober manhood and womanhood every phase of life which had a moral aspect must improve. So, after all, most of the questions to which my dense mind could trace no connection with the women's vote, were the direct result of women rising to a sense of their responsibility as Christian citizens, relative to drinking places.

Among other achievements brought to a finish by the vote and influence of women, was the enactment of an equal standard of morals in making the condition of divorce the same for both sexes.

Women have been admitted to practice in the law courts. Legal separation may be secured without any long drawn-out expensive process, and protection is afforded to working women against worthless husbands, for whom they bear children which become only an additional burden to overworked wives.

A husband is now restrained from willing away his property as formerly could be done, without making suitable provision for his wife and children.

Labor laws, with a view to improving the quarters in which women and girls are occupied, have been enacted; the health of female employees more carefully guarded, and the hours of toil reduced to a humane limit. Holidays have been fixed, and the payment of a minimum wage enforced.

The economic partnership of husband and wife has been set forth in two acts at least, and the Criminal Code has been amended in the direction of purer and better morals. Children may now be adopted only under legal regulations which safeguard the child

against either greed or abuse of foster parents. Pensions for the aged poor, both sexes being treated the same, now bridge over the years when men and women can no longer toil to the hour of a Christian burial instead of a pauper's grave.

Baby farming is now an impossible evil, and those places which were frequently regarded with a suspicious eye, known as registry, have been brought under official regulation to the greater protection of women and girls.

The Contagious Disease Act has been repealed; a Widow's Pension Act passed and enforced; the position and salaries of women teachers of State schools has been made equal with that of male teachers. But quite aside from the enactment, repeal or amendment of laws relating purely to the interests of women and children, great consideration has been given to new legislation affecting the social condition of all classes.

Several of the leading statesmen assured me that they had opposed the movement for suffrage to the bitter end, but the practical operation of the power in the hands of women had been a boon beyond estimate to the moral tone of the country.

The oft-repeated prophecy that casting a ballot would be the utter undoing of gentle and domesticated women, that motherhood would be a lost art and feminine graces would disappear, may all now be refuted after a period of practical experience.

I have been with numbers of women to the polls in almost all places where they are qualified electors, and I have never seen the slightest indication of any lack of gallantry or chivalry on the part of the men. Husbands and wives suit their convenience in the matter

of when they shall vote. Business men usually call at the booth and deposit their ballot—which, by the way, is the secret system—on their way to business, while women frequently plan to do their voting in connection with their shopping or other household duties.

The manner of voting known as the Australian ballot is different from the method in vogue in many countries. An elector enters the polling booth, gives his name, which has a particular number on the roll, and receives his voting paper. This is taken to a private booth, into which two voters may not enter at the same time, and the names of his candidates are marked according to set rules. The paper is folded, and, upon returning to the open booth, it is deposited through a small opening in the ballot-box which remains sealed until sunset, when the poll is closed and the ballots counted.

It is a violation of the law to canvas within twenty feet of a booth, and a fine of £20 is imposed upon an elector for carrying his voting paper out of the booth. Under this system there can be no possible knowledge of how an elector casts his vote.

The process is so simple that few mistakes can be made, and the possibility of corrupt practices is greatly decreased.

Thus far the franchise in the hands of the women of New Zealand has had such wholesome moral effect upon all conditions that one may travel the length of the land and never hear an adverse criticism upon the sound wisdom of having raised the women of the country to the dignity of persons and people. Infants and convicts remain without the pale of the constitution, but woman has come into her own so far as political classification is concerned.

CHAPTER III.

How the Women of Australia Got the Franchise.

WHEN the spirit of democracy seemed to seize the people of Australia and weave itself into all sorts of legislation along social lines, the various States became the great experimental stations of the world. Numerous innovations were the result of each session of Parliament, until the world fairly stood aghast.

In each State the franchise had been placed in the hands of all men over twenty-one years of age, with certain qualifications relating to time and place of residence. Lunatics, idiots, and women were relegated to a common dumping ground, where mental capacity rendered them companionable, at least so far as politics were concerned.

About twenty-one years ago an organization of women which had made the world its parish was being presented to the women of Australia. It was a firm belief of this society—the Woman's Christian Temperance Union—that the misery arising from the evils of strong drink, relating so closely to women and children as well as to home life, would never be put down until the ballot was placed in the hands of women. One of the twenty branches of the work of the Women's Christian Temperance Union was known as the Franchise Department, which sought to show what, by giving the vote to women, could be done in making the world a fit place for the sons and daughters of all men and women.

Being greatly interested in the work, while travelling in Australia I organized more than four hundred branches of the society in various parts of the country. In connection with each union a local superintendent of the Franchise Department was appointed. The various States were organized, and finally I completed the chain by calling a great convention in Melbourne. This was the first interstate assembly of women ever held in Australasia. It created unbounded interest. Delegates came from each State. A national superintendent of the Franchise Department was chosen, whose duty it was to encourage the superintendents of each State. These in turn gathered information as to the work of branches, and each brought up a report of her department at the Interstate Convention each year. The quiet work of the union had a marked bearing upon results. Although it never created what might be termed a public demand for the franchise, it was, however, a force.

At that time there was no movement of any wide extent organized with the sole object of securing the ballot for Australian women. And at the present moment I venture to say there is not one Australian woman in a thousand who has the faintest idea how or when the franchise was given to them. I have talked to thousands and thousands of women in the Commonwealth, and I have never found one—not even a leader in any of the women's political societies—who could give me information as to how the franchise was secured. It has been necessary to go to Hansard (parliamentary report) and read for weary hours through hundreds of pages before any intelligent understanding of the subject could be reached.

AN UNSOUGHT GIFT.

The gift that Australia placed freely in the hands of the women was not forced from men by an overpowering public sentiment. Ministers and members were not abused, threatened, and maltreated until life became a burden too great to be borne; their property was never endangered by the advance guard of a "popular demand." The truth is, the average woman was totally indifferent to the subject, and was without even a passing opinion as to what good or evil might arise from such new responsibilities. There was a reason for this, and all criticism which does not consider the local situation at the time the franchise was granted is unjust in the extreme.

Every condition in Australia was, and still is peculiar to itself. Women were occupied, and this is true to-day, in the actual settlement and development of the country. In both city and country it is almost impossible to secure help, either man or maid, and women are more in the grind of actual housework in city and town, and farm work in the country, than in any other part of the world. They make great sacrifices to keep children at school, and heavy work devolves upon those most favorably situated. They positively had no time to know anything about the franchise or its benefits.

In Western Australia the bill was made a cat's-paw to carry a party measure. Sir John Forrest was then Premier. For years he had used his influence against franchise for women, but later a State issue arose against which Sir John also stood. He assumed leadership of the league which put forth great energy to keep the State of Western Australia out of the Federa-

tion. When Sir John suddenly changed front, his great anxiety was to devise a method by which he could carry to victory the identical issue he had worked strenuously to defeat. A brilliant idea dawned upon him: "Give women the franchise." Up to that moment his "political conviction" was that such a move would be an "unwarranted step." But necessity knows no bounds. Votes for women was the political broom used to sweep the State of Western Australia into the Commonwealth. Therefore, with willing hands and ready feet, the party made all haste to crown the women of the State with the political glory of citizenship. They were then and there created "persons" in their own right. But for all that, it must forever remain a source of humiliation to the women of that State, when they recall that necessity, and party necessity only, led the men to hand over to them that which should, in all justice, have been given when responsible government was secured to the State.

Without the slightest preparation for citizenship, or any inclination to take on the responsibility involved, the women of Western Australia were thrust into this new situation. The official report of the first election at which the women voted states that out of the numbers of women who took the trouble to enroll, or whose names were placed upon the roll for them, only fifteen per cent. went to the polls. The following election, which took place three years later, witnessed an increase over the previous vote of but a twenty-eighth of one per cent. All of which proves how hopeless is the process of legislation in advance of public sentiment.

WHERE THE VOTE WAS WANTED.

The State of Victoria was the last to grant the franchise to women. A study of the situation in that State affords conclusive proof that a demand must precede a supply in law-making, as well as in other affairs.

The women in the other States had been full-fledged citizens some years before those of Victoria came into their own. The injustice was keenly felt, and the women, in large numbers, were determined to secure the State vote. Again and again the Lower House had passed the bill, but a number of animated fossils in the Upper House had blocked the advancement for years. Goaded on by the attitude of the men, women renewed their energy, increased their zeal, and added hundreds to their numbers as the fight waxed harder. At last the opposing voices fell into the final hush from which no sound is heard, and the act was promptly passed—in 1908; but, strange to say, not until women of that State had been voting at Commonwealth elections for some years.

During the time the Victorian women were fighting for the State franchise, and, indeed, ever since, they polled the largest percentage of votes in the Federal elections cast in any State. They wanted the franchise. They fought for it. In voting they came within eight per cent. of the ballot cast by the men of the State. The result of the recent election shows that the women in the rural districts, who voted under numerous disadvantages, such as long distances to the polls and lack of means to reach booths, came out in greater numbers than in more closely settled districts

provided with greater facilities. The highest percentage of votes cast by women in any country district reached 80.35, and the lowest fell to 43.18. The latter is the record in a suburb of Melbourne, where every elector was practically within walking distance of the booth. Three hundred and twenty-two thousand enrolled, as against 297,000 men. The percentage of votes cast by men was 68.43. Women polled 59.12 per cent. of those enrolled. They are well organized, and there is little doubt that at future elections they will overtake the men. Yes, they wanted the ballot; they fought hard for years, and now they use it.

In South Australia, the first Australian State to enfranchise women, the bill was presented by one and then by another of the members—with varying degrees of success. First, they asked for limited franchise—a property qualification. It was lost—very much so. Ten years later the text was so amended as to include women on an equal standing with male citizens. This amended measure passed in 1894, largely through the efforts of Sir John Cockburn.

Those who favored the qualification clause were wildly opposed to equality with men. One of these orators concluded a dramatic exhibition of impotent fury by saying: "As the rights of women are recognized everywhere, from the Crown to the gallows, they need no place in politics." The pulse of the House seemed to indicate that the passage of the bill was a certainty. As a last attempt to stay further progress, an amendment was introduced making women eligible for Parliament. To the surprise of everyone it was carried—carried by a large majority, as was also the bill. South Australia is, however, the only State in

which women are eligible to occupy a seat in Parliament.

"THE GLORY-TOUCH."

The Commonwealth members have now and again taken great credit to themselves for giving women the vote for the Federal Government. Every once in a while some member rises, halo in hand, to anoint himself high priest, and claim the glory-touch of shepherding the women into the kingdom of Federal citizenship. In reading the Commonwealth Constitution it will be seen that there was no other legal course open to them. In the clearest English it is plainly declared that the Federal powers may not disfranchise any person by whose vote any of them hold their seats. As the members from at least two States have been sent there partly by the votes of women, it was impossible to disfranchise the women of those States. Neither would it have been a statesmanlike move to legislate in favor of the women of two States and debar those of the other States from the same privileges. Hence, they were practically bound to give women of the whole Commonwealth the suffrage.

Citizenship, as this record shows, having in almost every State been forced upon women, it is clearly seen that nothing short of education will lead them to a sense of their obligations. The situation in Australia can have no possible bearing upon the woman's movement in other lands. Elsewhere politicians have not yet fallen to the pit-level of handing over to women what justly belongs to them merely to use them politically. Where women want the ballot, there they will make use of it.

CHAPTER IV.

Women of Australia as Citizens.

IN order to take a calm survey as to the real value of the votes for women in Australia, it is necessary to present the absolute facts as to results, bearing in mind that there are numerous local situations which obtain only in lands where women are pioneers. These easily account for the lack of interest on their part in the politics of the day. The heavy burdens resting upon them in this new land as mothers, wives, home-makers and house-keepers, rivet them to the grind of burdensome routine work.

The facts here presented are gathered entirely from official sources, and are removed in every sense from opinions of either myself, or others.

It may be well at the outset to state my own personal views on the suffrage question, that the reader may understand I write wholly free from prejudice. I was born, reared and educated in a country where "lunatics, idiots, convicts, red Indians and women" are declared by constitution and usage unfit for the gift of citizenship. I was nourished, cherished, and cradled in an atmosphere of belief that women had, of course, been properly classified. I, therefore, in common with the girls of my time, accepted it in the passive way usually extended to subjects on which we were not informed and in which we had no voice;—satisfied, although we were not even designated as "people."

It was not until I took up a systematic study of economics and realized woman's value along those lines to home and national life, that suffrage for women took the form of a vital principle in my mind. This was intensified after six weeks in the East End of London, where I earned my living among the people as organ-grinder, costermonger, selling flowers, newspapers, and hawking at Ludgate Hill. My experience there increased my conviction that there were conditions in the social order of our day which will never be removed until the women of the country wherein the evils exist have the power to help put them down.

It was generally predicted, in reference to the ballot in the hand of Australian women, that it would be merely a matter of doubling the vote on each side, and, therefore, would have little effect upon politics generally. But this conclusion was arrived at without any knowledge of women's real attitude toward the subject.

The women electors are divided into two classes: those who want the vote and use it, and those who regard citizenship as a joke, and a very unpleasant one at that. Of the latter, they and their children are well-provided for; the pangs of hunger and the pinch of poverty, the grind of never-ending toil and the battle of simply keeping alive and staying on earth, are all strange to them. Without any knowledge of the laws that govern women and children, they are quite certain they have all that is to be desired by way of legislation. Their husbands "will look after that," and they have no further concern. The women of Australia are so delightful and so full of common-sense in most things, one never ceases to admire them,

but many are not yet awakened concerning the new order of things which was thrust upon them almost before they were aware that such a movement was in contemplation. They are rapidly learning that to keep pace with the onward march of events in the world, an interest in citizenship is the longest measure in the time of progress; for, within democratic citizenship is enfolded the hidden possibilities of a new social order which alone will move the world upward and onward.

In Australia the party spirit is so fierce and bitter that women labor under very great disadvantages in exercising the vote. Politics represent Democracy gone mad, on one hand, and Conservatism pot-bound, on the other; the latter, too, under the abused name of Liberalism. Their respective policies are poles apart. This alone makes it impossible for women to vote for men. No matter what sort of a person steps out from obscurity with an eternal faith in his ability as a business man in national affairs, he is welcome to a seat if he is glib of tongue and tinged with the microbe of words or the germ of speech. A man who has been a most dismal failure in personal business, seems to regard that fact as a supreme qualification for helping to conduct the business of a great nation and drawing a large salary.

When a man stands for his party and there is but one candidate, a woman frequently regards him as utterly undesirable and wholly incompetent to legislate for the requirements of her home and children; yet, she must either support him or vote against her political conviction. So far as policy is concerned, therefore, it may easily be seen how great is the disadvantage

under which the women of Australia carry out the duties of citizenship. The whole atmosphere for weeks and weeks before election is charged with a cruelly fierce anti-spirit. One side is just as bad as the other. Nothing is sacred. Personal attack is the usual order of an election campaign, and a capacity for personal abuse seems a criterion of preference.

All of this makes it impossible to give the slightest idea of the political difficulties which hedge the women citizens of Australia about with disadvantages. The result of their use of the vote has not the slightest bearing upon any other country of the world; for nowhere are conditions in the least similar to those in which the women of Australia have their being.

It is perfectly true that 470,000 women did not vote at the last Federal election; but there was also a great number of men who abused the privilege; something more than half a million. As there are one hundred and eleven men to every hundred women, one may understand what the comparison of these figures means.

It is impossible to expect the evils entrenched behind the mighty fortifications of man-made legislation to fall like the walls of Jericho when some one sounds the blast that "woman has the vote, now we will see what she will do with it." Men have been citizens for hundreds of years, and are directly responsible for all defects of our social order, and yet the moment woman is dragged without asking for it (in Australia) from political seclusion to which usage has relegated her, the world expects her over-night to remedy the results of centuries of bad legislation. Well, it will never be done. Men have *grown* into

enacting wise legislation, where such a thing is found, and women will do the very same; therefore, men and women being more or less alike in some respects, no one need to look for revolutionized affairs in the twinkling of an eye. The disorders of social conditions in Australia are the outgrowth of the citizenship of men for many generations, and woman possesses no magic wand with which she may command evil to vanish and justice to appear. No, the process of undoing a usage is a matter of the education of public sentiment, and before the women can progress far along new lines, they will have to devise some plan to awaken a sense of the responsibility of citizenship in the men of Australia as well as the women.

The serious situation bearing upon an indifference to citizenship and the failure to perform their duty at the polls has engaged the attention of thinking men and women in the different States.

In West Australia a resolution to impose a fine upon all qualified non-voters was passed by a society of women, and a committee was appointed to wait upon the Government requesting them to bring in a bill covering the situation.

The resolution read:

"WHEREAS, The ballot was thrust upon the women of this State to meet a political and party emergency, before public sentiment was ripe for it, and no effort has been made to educate them up to the duties and responsibilities of citizenship;

"*Resolved,* That the Government be called upon to enforce voting, by all men and women duly qualified, under penalty of a fine of five pounds for the first offence, and a month's imprisonment for the second."

In one of the States where voters were lax in recording their ballots a bill to enforce voting was in the process of contemplation when I was last in that part of the country.

Such unspeakable selfishness of business and professional men of brains and ability, and their abominable indifference to their duty of citizenship, have never been known in any other part of the world. Until some great national calamity arrests the attention of the best people, things will remain as they are. Anyone will drift into power—from a street-sweeper to a pie-peddler.

The women are now engaged in organizing, and in some States such political movements flourish to an unexpected extent. They are strictly party movements, and all energy is devoted to securing a return of party candidates and evolving party measures. Frequently they work with the men's leagues of the respective parties, and in other cases they carry on their work as women's organizations.

It must be understood that "party measure" includes the pushing of reforms which have a direct bearing upon the community at large, quite aside from the interests of women and children. Frequently deputations appear before the Ministers of one department after another urging some reform of wide and general interest. Their meetings are hives of industry, and live, keen activity.

The class of women who exercise the ballot most extensively is made up of the wives of the working men, who, first of all, have a true sense of appreciation in being classified as people and persons.

It must be said that the working women have a

clearer grasp of what the use of the ballot means than have the women whose lines have fallen in less toilsome places. There is dignity, very great dignity, in the mere fact that women have been placed in a position where they have a direct voice in making the laws under which they and their children must live. The working women are keenly alive to this, and unceasingly strive to live up to the advanced position in which citizenship has planted them. They well know the power the women of Australia have in their hands, and, moreover, they know how to make the widest, if not always the wisest, use of it, largely for the reason that they have something to gain. If they ever move out from the bondage and slavery of being driven to vote for a given man, who alone may claim their ballot, they will not be slow to make calls upon candidates that will put men to the test.

If the social problems demanding legislation do not receive the attention of Members, women are in a position to unseat them, and fill their places with men who will carry out their wishes. But as yet they are not united upon common issues. It will come. I have met nothing among women of such absorbing interest as the dawn of conscious power which has come upon them.

In many parts of Australia a leader among the working women knows where to put her hand on her forces at any hour. Not only so, but she is able to marshal them into line in quick order. They are in small companies ready to take up marching orders at a second of command. Upon election days they swarm to party rescue from every quarter.

Everyone loves strength. It appeals to the weakest.

No one can look unmoved upon the condensed strength and power of this marching procession of women, advancing toward the goal of their hopes and ambitions. They have gained momentum, and an object of contact is certain to go into pieces before the force that presses them onward. All of this is the undeniable, indisputable, sure and certain result of the women rising to the obligations of citizenship. The point is not how or why they vote, but they vote. They are getting what they desire, because they have the good, hard, common sense to seek it through the only possible channel of command.

The working-women have grandly and nobly risen to the discharge of their duty as citizens so far as actual voting is concerned. For this we must give them full and just credit, whatever the impelling motive may have been.

Numerous measures for the improvement of the condition of working women have come into effect in recent years. These, in a measure, have been brought about by the women through Unionism, back of the Parliamentary party which represents the interest of the working people. Most astonishing regulations have been made to the advantage of the toiling masses, both as to pay, proper work rooms and a living wage, There is still room for improvement, but things have moved, and movement means *gathering momentum.*

Another serious drawback to women, or a certain class of women, in feeling the vital possibilities of citizenship is the attitude of certain ministers who fear the loss of energy to the Church if women become interested " outside " or take a larger view of life and human affairs.

There is often a decided note of "no politics in this Church," and some preachers are as afraid of the very name as though it stood for the arch enemy of men's souls. One dear soul, born out of his time, and a menace to his generation, calmly told me that he had never voted in his life. "In fact," said the godly man, "my citizenship is in heaven." He certainly was overdue where he holds his citizenship.

The idea of Christian citizenship seems never to have dawned upon some church members, and even if it had, they became prejudiced against a candidate because he entertained "other views" on certain moral questions. Because they cannot manufacture a fleshly bundle of accumulated virtues and label it "my candidate," they calmly decline (with thanks) any responsibility of citizenship, and devote their entire energy to what is termed by them, Christian Work. That is, they lapse into a state of pious enchantment over one sinner gathered into the fold (if only for a day) while the lack of proper laws drives countless numbers to spiritual blight and bodily ruin.

Women church members hold the balance of power. Let men who stand in the pulpit and have the courage to deal with citizenship as related to women church members, sound a sane note on this far-reaching subject. This done, the Church will do something to warrant support by a public which is so rapidly withdrawing, and joining other agencies for the uplift of the world.

At any rate, whether preachers rise to this duty or not, there is no possible way for a woman, no matter what her position in life may be, to escape the fact that

a duty has been placed upon her, which every instinct of patriotism, every sense of loyalty, and every interest in her home and country demands she should discharge in the normal, conscientious manner in which she sets about the accomplishment of her duty in home, church, and society.

One other association must be mentioned which, although making very slow progress in point of membership and numbers, is certainly operating upon the right lines.

They claim to be non-partisan, and their general platform has been constructed so as to embrace interests which would attract women of either party where they could work to remedy defective legislation concerning women and children. They have placed no end of necessary reforms upon their program, all of which should appeal to every woman in the land, but up to the present time the interest is limited to purely party-freed women, or those who think they are. As they all vote, they must have some party preference of either men or measures.

Numbers of men object very much to any organization which brings the women together outside of the party lines. They fear it would be the beginning of a Woman's Party, a movement which every man with whom I have spoken has declared would be a menace to women on general principles. In reply to my question as to why such disaster would come like a plague of locusts upon the land, they have usually answered. "A Woman's Party would be sure to elect women Members, and—think of it!"

In giving the vote to the women of Australia the

men clearly expected mere voting to be the Alpha and Omega of citizenship, and that voting would be done purely upon party lines. They forget that there is no such a thing as "women's interests" as distinguished from men's interests. The interests are compound. No power on earth could separate them. What degrades or uplifts one has precisely the same effect upon the other, and always has had; not only so, but always will have. Every man alive (or dead, too, for that matter), was born of woman:—flesh of her flesh, and bone of her bone; and every woman upon the earth is the daughter of man. It is the merest nonsense in the world to talk of separate interests. There can never be such a thing; there can never be anything but common cause between men and women under the present system of Creation.

Some of the conservative element in Australia still look shocked over the idea of "woman in politics," and often regret the vote for women. But it was not the franchise that brought woman into politics, nor yet was it working for the ballot. No, they have always been in politics; because politics is everywhere in their home where they must live, move and have their being.

The woman faces politics when she takes her tea, when she puts on her dress, when she feeds her chained and licensed dog, when she reads the newspaper, when she sits on the charity board, when she sends a loaf of bread to a poor drunkard's family, when her son puts his first money on a race horse, and when every other licensed evil threatens her home and happiness. It is because women have always been helplessly and hopelessly in politics even when shut within

four walls, that they are, or should be, most interested citizens. That interest is growing in Australia as elsewhere, and the world may just as well be calm and accept it as a necessary feature of the age in which we live as to waste life and energy defying the Fates.

CHAPTER V.

Some Laws Relating to Women and Children in Australia.

AS in other countries, the women of Australia, generally speaking, are alarmingly ignorant of the laws under which they live. Few, indeed, have the slightest knowledge of even their legal relation to their children; and as for their status, it is as unknown to them as the most remote foreign subject.

Although women have been made equal with men, so far as voting is concerned, the most appalling inequality in their legal status obtains in every State of the Commonwealth. This is most glaring in regard to punishment for given offences; in provision made by some of the States for the housing of offenders against the law as in the case of State wards; especially in relation to the conduct of women in public places. There are offences in public streets for which a policeman places his hand upon a woman and brings her to account for her deportment before the law,—while a man, guilty of similar conduct, merely acts up to the privileges which are granted by men to men.

A girl who, with painted face and brazen mien, flaunts her calling in the face of a man on the street, who objects to her boldness and, with righteous unction, seeks to "put down" her kind, may hand her over to the police. He may prefer charges against her, being the sole witness, on whose evidence she is sentenced, and the law is often meted out according to

the standing of the outraged male victim. She pays the penalty. "Men and women sin two by two, but they pay for it one by one." Woman is the one.

A man may outrage every sense of decency by improper advances and proposals to a woman in the street. Unless he is in a state of intoxication, she has no redress. A man who is really out of his normal mind under the influence of liquor is legally responsible to the law for his liberties with women on a public highway; but a brute, clothed as a gentleman, about whom there is no sign by which to take warning as in the case of a drunken man, may freely manifest his brutalized nature in the face of self-respecting women citizens, and there is no appeal for them. The poor drunkard is the victim of the law, and a woman, —well, if she is fleet of foot, she may escape if there are lights which would make pursuit on his part unsafe.

Women would be horrified if one boldly declared that no mother in the Commonwealth really owned her children. The only child whose ownership is vested in the mother is the one born out of wedlock. When it becomes a matter of disgrace, the mother and innocent child must forever bear the brand. The law says it is hers; she may have, hold, possess and own it. Furthermore, it must be registered in the mother's name as an illegitimate child. A child born in wedlock may not carry his mother's name and omit his father's, except by special Act of Parliament. If the mother is able to produce evidence—proof positive—as to the father, which is a most difficult matter in the face of the numerous legal safeguards, he is required to make a small contribution to the support of mother and child.

This, however, is so far from being adequate to keep them from starvation that the mother, often a mere girl, is driven to every extremity in order to support her offspring. It usually ends in the child going to some institution or becoming a charge of the State. If the father is unmarried, it is an easy matter to escape the clutches of the law, and go where he will be quite free to continue his criminal career.

In Victoria, an effort was made to wipe out this vile system, which would have been a disgrace to the dark ages, by the introduction into Parliament of a bill modelled upon the laws enacted in Switzerland. The object in view was to check the evil before it assumed the shocking and alarming proportions it has reached in many parts of Europe.

The bill set forth that all children of this class whose parentage could be made clear, must be registered in the father's name, the child of an *illegitimate father.* As every child comes into the world along the lines of the one and only law prescribed by the Almighty, it follows that there is no such thing as an illegitimate child. The illegitimate proceeding is on the part of the father, and he should bear the disgrace. Hence the justice of the child bearing the father's name.

The bill further provided, in cases where the father was a married man, that this child should have an equal claim upon his property with those of his legal wife. If the father chanced to be unmarried, he must at once assume legal relation to the child by marrying the mother. In a country of progressive and experimental legislation, it is by no means surprising to learn of the introduction of such a bill. The astounding part of it is that the majority against it was but one vote.

Never has a more heroic measure been undertaken than this effort to protect innocent childhood. It is certain that in the near future an enlightened public sentiment will bring Victoria out of the moth-eaten and iron-rusted usages of bygone times, by passing a similar bill.

Meantime the entire responsibility rests upon the women voters. What are they citizens for if not to know something of the laws under which they live, and to use their mighty power of citizenship to remove these abuses?

Until this is done the ancient legislation which took rootage in the Rock of Ages, will still disgrace the statute books of the States and Commonwealth. No degree of advanced legislation can be termed democratic until it first of all obliterates sex.

So far as I am able to learn there is not one of the States in which girls are properly protected by law. Because of the activity of women's societies the laws are greatly improved, but at most the age of consent is not above sixteen years—the very time when girls need every possible protection of both home and State.

A child who cannot legally sell her doll or her toys may sell her virtue. A man may place a sovereign, or a shilling for that matter, in a girl's hand as the price for which he traffics in virtue, and there is no redress for the girl and no punishment for the man. In regard to a girl's material possessions, the law argues that until she is twenty-one she is not sufficiently balanced and lacks judgment and experience to enable her to safely possess houses and lands.

False ideas on the part of mothers, and criminal failure to impart to girls the information which will make

them capable of self-protection by a knowledge of self, render them easy prey and victims. Girls will never be properly protected in that or any other country until women, as citizens, make it their business to see that proper laws are enacted, and mothers back up the laws by some common-sense teaching on these subjects in the home. Ignorance is by no means innocence; frequently quite the reverse. Girls learn by experience out of their homes to their sorrow those things which should form the chief feature of the home education of every girl.

The most absurd laws regulate the relation of father and mother to their children and the property of those children. It is a matter on which women in general have bestowed little thought.

In some States the father practically owns the children. A dying husband may absolutely will away an unborn child. When he is dead and six feet of sod cover him, his morally criminal action becomes a living force, the effects of which will never die. No depth of sod could keep down his responsibility. Cases of this sort are on record, and are a matter of present-day experience. A mother cannot appoint guardians for her children in her will unless her husband is divorced. A husband may will away his entire possessions leaving his wife and children utterly destitute. A wife has no legal claim upon his property so far as his ability to dispose of it by will is concerned.

When it comes to a sense of justice, or even logic in lawmaking, men are certainly very curious. So grotesque is woman's position concerning property, it would be amusing as well as absurd were it not for the cruel operation of the law. For instance, when a son

has acquired property, but failed in the good sense to also possess himself of non-assessable chattels—as a woman and children—such an one, dying without will, the law gives his possessions to "his next of kin," which, being interpreted, means his father. By what process of logic it is reasoned out that the father is next of kin to a mother's children is not at all clear to the dense mind of a woman. I am here reminded of the reasoning power of a little boy on the subject. The said boy was given four shillings with which to purchase Christmas presents for his father and mother. The day before he was to bestow his choice of gifts upon his happy parents, he shyly approached his mother, saying, "Mother, I spent the money. I paid three shillings for a present for you, and one shilling for one for father." The astonished mother inquired into this favoritism on her behalf, to find that her hopeful son had expended the money after a most logical process of analysis which should wholly vindicate his action.

"Well, you see, mother," said the child, "father is related to me only by marriage, but you are related to me by bornation."

Where does "bornation" logically and legally come in in "next of kin"? A question for women citizens to answer.

Again, if a wife dies intestate, all her property goes to the husband. Few women seem aware of this. If, however, a man dies under similar circumstances, one-third goes to his wife and the remainder to the children. The manner in which the former law may work itself out was illustrated in the case of a most unscrupulous man marrying a woman of means chiefly be-

cause of her possessions. She inherited by will the large estates of her first husband at his death, as well as a goodly heritage from her parents. These she held, not in trust, but as her own, from which she planned to educate her daughters. Meantime, she married a second husband to whom she bore two sons.

While out with her family an accident befell them in which she was instantly killed, passing away without a will. This left the property willed to her by her first husband, and that to which she fell heir from her parents, absolutely to the second husband. Note the operation of the law. He at once made his will in favor of his own children, and the bulk of the estates at his death passed into the hands of his boys; leaving but meagre provisions for his wife's three daughters. Strange that women citizens accept such possible injustice through a legal channel as the heritage of their children with full power in their hands to right every wrong!

There is also that relic of the ages so remote that one can hardly recall the "when" of it,—the unequal grounds for divorce; giving man all the advantage and license which was granted, or rather which he took when Time was still young.

The legal establishment of two codes of morals in the divorce Law Courts, one for men and one for women, is strangely out of tune with the setting of a new country. But here it is flourishing in a number of the States. An aroused public sentiment—if it could be created—would overturn such injustice during a single sitting of Parliament, if women voters were alive to their duty.

It would be impossible to record all the inequalities

which exist in the statutes of this great Commonwealth.

The same distinction is carried down even to the institutions provided by the State for men and women, who, in one way or another, became either temporary or permanent wards of the State.

Take for illustration one of the prisons where I went over the quarters assigned to the men and those set apart for the women. Compare one feature only—that of bathing facilities. The men's quarters were properly partitioned off. They enjoyed that sense of privacy due to every human being, no matter how unfortunate his estate. But the women's quarters, what were they like? Merely a series of tubs side by side. Each was open, and they were ranged along the wall without regard to that degree of common decency to which a man or a woman is entitled, no matter what may be the unfortunate conditions to which they have come. That the slightest distinction in the measure of comfort provided for men and women should be made in favor of men, is a blemish not only upon men responsible for the injustice, but upon all citizens who sit idly by and tolerate abuses to which they could put an end by taking an intelligent interest in the well-being of those about them.

CHAPTER VI.

Suffrage as Related to the Birth-rate in Australia.

IN searching for straws with which to prop up arguments to prove the failure or evil results of women exercising the rights of citizenship, irresponsible persons and an antiquated section of the press have boldly asserted that the decreased birth-rate of Australia was due solely to the enlarged political status of women. They have gone so far as to say that women are so utterly consumed with public activities, and so fascinated by the novelty, as to refuse to pursue the usual domestic highway, with the direful effect upon the birth-rate.

Another grave charge is the evidence in the children of the lack of home training indicated by "rude manners" in the average Australian child.

Mothers of all classes are overworked. This is one situation which cannot be overcome by the possession of money. It all revolves around the cruel lack of domestic help. The entire supervision of the house, often housework itself, including the washing, devolves upon the mother. Then, there is the care of the children: the making and mending, not to mention the individual training which no real mother can neglect. Church work and social obligations are demands which must be met to a greater or less extent.

In thousands of cases, all detail falls to a single pair of hands. Often the strain is more than flesh and

bones can endure. At the very outset, then, it must be remembered that the mother is under great nerve and energy strain almost every moment of her waking hours.

As population increases some of these difficulties may vanish. It is doubtful, however, as the cause of the condition gives no token of change. Domestic help is simply impossible.

This state of affairs calls for greatly revised methods of housekeeping, which, in less-favored climes would be out of the question. The nursery is transferred to the open, either the lawn or sand, where even the baby is free to crawl about at will—investigating the mud-pies and play-houses of the elder ones. If one of them trips and falls, unless injured, the busy mother calls from some point where she has them in sight, "Get up; that's a little man," or "Don't cry, don't be a baby." The tears are dried without coddling, and the imaginary hurt is cured without any interruption on the part of the always busy mother. This does not mean neglect, but it spells in very large letters the beginning of independence of children so noticeable in Australia.

They play out-of-doors from one week-end to another, and live in the open as much as possible. They romp, scamper, roll, and frolic, and they yell and shout, for they are lusty young creatures. As this continues day by day out of doors, it may easily be seen how, when in the house, they often forget to lower their voices, walk softly, or close the doors without a bang. The romp and fun spirit is still upon them, and what might be considered most objection-

able manners is but a lack of consciousness that lawn deportment should be subdued in the house.

It is perfectly true that the great majority of children are sadly deficient in the personal charm of pleasing manners, which is by no means a "station of life" defect. They are very excitable by temperament, and scamper to the doors, windows, fence or gate, at every possible opportunity to cheer or yell. They love to watch processions, funerals or a circus; crowd to foolball games, prize fights, races, or any manner of sport at which those of tender years are allowed. They bet, hurrah, and manifest for their "side," regardless of fair play or other considerations. Crowding the picture shows, they scream, shout, and fairly roar and hoot or clap in following the keynote sounded by the audience. The truth is, children are often given too much liberty along apparently harmless lines, but which, in reality, have a reflex action most questionable in effect. A love for healthy sport is wholesome and a normal condition to vigorous childhood, but an over-developed love for pleasure and excitement is bad, very bad.

This independent spirit among the children, and their assumed ability to look after themselves gives an unfavorable impression as to the proper training in the home. It is erroneous so far as a large percentage of homes is concerned.

In time the romp wears off. The "good will to others," which is really the spirit of the child, finds expression later in a grace of manner that will, in the future, stand to the credit of the young people of Australia.

It must not be supposed that the children are always left to themselves. The real charm of the mother is

that she makes time for "the children's hour." How they love it! How the mother loves it! And how often the dad joins in. Yes, the children's hour moulds many a life. It is a supreme balancing factor in thousands of homes.

"Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupation
That is known as the Children's Hour.

"They climb up into my turret,
O'er the arms of my great armchair;
If I try to escape they surround me—
They seem to be everywhere."

Longfellow knew. Many a time have I seen the rhythm of these expressive lines set to the music of action. Often a mother has said, "I must now have my hour with the children. Take a book and come with me." Under a pretext of reading, but really to join in the delight of that most enchanting hour, I have followed to the upper room, where a great consciousness of all that I have missed in life has come again and again with an overpowering sense.

The children had prepared each other for bed and were eagerly anticipating their hour—their very own hour. First came the mother's talk on the conduct of the day, and how they had treated each other. Then followed apologies for rudeness, kisses of forgiveness, a general clearing up of all the day's accounts, ready to begin a new and clean page on the morrow. After these confessions, not wrung from them, the puckered lips, moist eyes, and the sweet

resolve to be better to-morrow, happiness reigns in each little heart—then comes a chapter of the favorite story, followed by a romp with dad. The day closes with clasped hands and upturned faces as they kneel about the mother's knee,—then, O the joy of it! the good-night kisses, each resolved to have the "last."

In hundreds of homes have I seen this beautiful sight repeated with varying details, as a hard-worked mother finished the day of grind and struggle, with the never-ceasing hope that she will be able to stir the very best in her children into action.

"The greatest battles that ever were fought,
I'll tell you where and when—
On the maps of the world you will find them not,
For they were fought by the mothers of men."

I would not pretend for a moment to say that this picture is a true one of every home in Australia. I wish it were. But it is quite within bounds to state that there are hundreds of thousands of just such homes, not confined to one class, but in every walk of life. There are thousands of mothers deeply interested in national life because they know the highest interests of their children are at stake in the making of the laws under which they must grow up. But interest in a given subject by no means indicates the neglect of all others in order to serve one only.

A decrease of birth-rate prevails chiefly in the families of the high middle class: among women of culture and refinement. It is not shrinking from a responsibility that has produced this result, but a deep understanding of how great is the responsibility, and

what the rearing of a family up to the present-day requirements means. Much more is expected of a child now than formerly. There was a time when a very limited education was sufficient for girls. They married young, and domestic life bounded their horizon. Not so to-day. Girls, as well as young men, are less and less inclined to marry, but are generally disposed towards business pursuits, for which they must be trained. It is a day of specialty. To succeed in the world means to be prepared to the point of excellence in some one thing, and go at it in earnest. This involves greater expense in rearing a family and providing all that is expected for them until they are grown, and properly launched in life. As the children come along one by one it usually means increasing sacrifice on the part of a mother, which often reaches the point of giving up all extras for herself, and ends in doing without help. At last, over-worked, she lands in nervous prostration and general wreckage. The demands are so much greater than energy of flesh and bones, that mothers must go to the wall physically and children fall behind the requirements, or families become less.

Although marriage has decreased and the birth-rate per family is on the decline, the increase in population among the white race is greater than it has ever been. This is due to the diminished percentage of mortality among children, especially infants during the first year of their lives. The infant death-rate is the lowest in Australia and New Zealand of any country of the world. The study of child-life now ranks among the scientific studies in Australia. In the medical profession there are men who devote all their time to the

treatment of children's diseases. Nurses are specially qualified to care for them, and hospital work for the little folk is one entirely aside from any relation to adults. It is the children's day, and the women of Australia are helping to make it so. They are now being made ready for the world and life. The greatest advance in any science of modern times is in that directed toward the conservation of infant life.

In poor settlements in the midst of city life thousands of mothers are instructed in the care of infants. The most highly-trained nurses go before them and demonstrate, by object lessons, how to best care for a child in every particular. Then, too, child diseases are better understood and the whole situation of infant mortality has been grasped to the saving of infants, which, set over against the birth-rate, and the diminished percentage of marriage, still leaves an increase in the population. Until the science of child-life is equally understood among dark races there is little danger of the white race being swamped. In China, eight children out of ten die the first year. Among white races only three out of ten die.

Over a hundred years ago the younger Malthus wrote an essay on the "Principle of Population." The idea was entirely new. No one had ever figured out such an astounding proposition. His father, who was also considered an authority on the question of population, could hardly grasp the truth of the figures; for the young man proved that in an alarmingly short time the earth would cease to yield a supply of food equal to the population. His theory was not accepted in his day, but those who are familiar with the work of Professor Brentane will know that the most accurate

calculation known to mathematical science has proved that Malthus' "Principles" were quite correct. The professor says: "The consequence has been an absolutely unprecedented increase of population, and if it were to continue at the same rate as within the last twenty-five years, there would in 893.35 years be one European to every metre (about forty inches) of surface of the globe; and if we include the other races, we should in a thousand years stand shoulder to shoulder. This means that there would not be a foot of soil anywhere on the earth's surface for food production." From these facts it may be seen how necessary it is before alarmists set out to harangue the public from platform, pulpit and press, to look into the subject in all of its bearings and become familiar with facts.

There are other phases of this question which will have a very marked effect, not only on the future percentage of the birth-rate, but also upon the vigor of oncoming generations. Women, in Australia especially, have advanced in a knowledge of scientific motherhood. They are seriously considering themselves as life-givers. In contemplating the far-reaching consequences as such, they have a new and enlarged vision of their life-giving rights, as well as of their responsibilities. Science has come to their aid, and declared that no living woman, no matter how strong she may be, can do justice to children either by way of care or otherwise, unless there is at least a period of three and a half or four years between births. Women have come to feel that in the best interests of the future race, it is better to rear three or four physically sound and mentally fit, citizens, than to help swell the increasing flood of poorly-equipped speci-

mens of humanity that make up so large a number of the rank and file of the race. Yes, women are beginning to see that there is one supreme and sacred right which they, as life-givers must demand. That is to decide when they are mentally, spiritually and physically able to take on the conditions of motherhood and carry them out to the highest betterment of the human family. It is a well-known fact that less care is given to improve the human family by proper time, and seasons of birth, than there is to preserving a particular breed of swine or sheep.

Evidence is now being heard concerning the use of the totalizator as a gambling agency. One witness pointed out that the abolition of the machine would seriously affect horse-breeding. Nothing was stated, however, as to the effect upon the human race. It is surprising, in looking over the financial statement of the State Treasurer, to learn the vast sums expended on the care of the mentally and physically unfit, and recall that no legislation has been passed to prevent the procreation of unfit. Women citizens are now considering these great and vital factors in their new relations to true national development.

By scientific process the silkworms of France were once saved to that country by destroying the eggs of the diseased worm. This same process is carried out in most orders of lower animal life to improve stock; but when woman conceives the idea of producing a fit human race in the only possible way—that is, when she herself is fit to become a life-giver—then the very air is rent with libellous utterances concerning her scientific attitude toward her own off-spring, and squint-brained so-called students (?) of affairs feel

called upon to make themselves absurd by dealing with situations as seen only through a smoked glass.

No railing or wailing, no groans, or moans, or abuse, will move women in their fixed and determined purpose to safeguard the future generations. The women of Australia are very much alive on some questions; there is no doubt whatever about that.

I have before me the official report issued by the Department of Defence. An act of universal training for military defence was passed some time ago. This sets forth that all boys between the ages of thirteen and fourteen must go into training until eighteen years of age. This is compulsory. Of about 100,000 who presented themselves for medical examination in the Commonwealth, 2.7 per cent. were temporarily unfit; that is, they were suffering from some physical defects which would be remedied in time.

Out of the whole number, the very small percentage of 3.5 were found wholly unfit for training. In round numbers about 4,000 out of 100,000 were rejected. It is very doubtful if any other country could clear so large a percentage of physically sound lads, between the ages of thirteen and fourteen years.

There seems little danger of the decay of the race, while voting women are able to point to such results, and insist that this new land shall be made up of *quality,* leaving women to regulate quantity.

CHAPTER VII.

Aims of Australian Women Citizens.

THERE is a widespread feeling among thoughtful women in Australia that the boasted "equality" of the sexes is more or less a farce. As a matter of fact that equality extends scarcely beyond the privilege of casting a vote.

Whatever opinions we may entertain as to the bounds which should limit woman's activity, we are all agreed that the principle established in the justice of the equal right of women with men in the matter of voting should be applied to all things which pertain to men and women. If there is to be no recognized sex at the ballot-box, there should be none in either the enactment of or carrying out of the laws. This phase of woman's status seems not yet to have dawned upon the men of Australia, but the women are beginning to think—some of them.

One association of women, which claims to be non-partisan in political creed, has set it down as part of their "fighting platform" that absolute equality must be the final goal toward which they steadily move. First, they are asking that women should be made eligible for the positions of aldermen and councillors.

It is rather remarkable that women may be elected to the Commonwealth Parliament, but in only one State may they enjoy the same privilege, and the Municipal Acts limit the qualifications for election as aldermen to men only. In fact, the act states in the plainest English—"any man." The seats are safe-

guarded from any presumption that women are entitled to occupy them by eliminating the word "persons."

A claim is also being put in to give women the right to sit on juries. The act defining qualification for such service states "any man," etc., as also does that which pertains to the appointment of a justice of the peace. Thus the citadel of masculine power and monopoly in the municipal arena is being bombarded by a demand for equality on the part of the women.

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE.

As in most parts of the world, the divorce and marriage laws operate in Australia in a widely different way when applied to men than when women are being measured by their standards. Perhaps the greatest fight in the near future will take place upon these points of legislation. In one State—West Australia—a bill was brought in to equalize the divorce laws, and after a hard and bitter fight, it was carried; but the women of the State worked hard for it, and finally succeeded.

It is now the purpose of the women to try to have these laws unified and taken over by the Federal Government. This power is delegated to the Commonwealth Government, but as yet they have not taken up the matter of a universal marriage and divorce law for all States applying equally to men and women.

At the present time the rights of the father over the child differ greatly from those of the mother, both as to ownership and guardianship; as also are those which relate to the wife's share in the accumulation of the marriage partnership.

There has been more or less agitation on the part of certain societies of women for these reforms, but as yet there is nothing like a general demand for an alteration of the law from the rank and file of women. The process of education is slow and hard. Women, as a whole, are not thinking, but the persistent manner in which a section of them "keep at it" brings hope to the hearts of the leaders.

That "hardy annual" which flourishes at all seasons of the year in the form of a demand for a given wage, regardless of sex, for an equal standard of work, is always to the fore. In the agitation there seems to be the absence of any true test as to the comparative economic value of women and men in the labor market. But even if a true analysis of comparative values throws the balance against women, they should still agitate for a more equal rate of pay for woman's service than that which is now in practice.

EDUCATION.

There are at present no women inspectors of the public schools. It is rather ridiculous to see a full-grown man among the little girls just learning to sew, fingering over their needlework when he does not know a hem from a binding, or a bias from a gore. It is just as absurd to watch his movements in the domestic science department as he wanders loose and at large among the pots and pans, hardly knowing a saucepan from a tea-kettle.

There is much dissatisfaction concerning the regulations of the Educational Department, especially in regard to the restrictions placed upon women in the

higher schools of learning. The women are desirous of making the universities perfectly free to any student qualified to enter. Their object is to give the clever children among the working classes an equal chance with those more favored by fortune to rise to the highest place of usefulness.

It is further proposed to agitate for equality of men and women in filling the positions of teachers, professors, and governors in similar proportion.

As there is great need of dealing with the question of help in the home, it is proposed to elevate the occupation of homekeeping to that of a science in order to induce a higher class of girls to adopt it. To this end there will soon be a struggle for the erection of a Domestic Science College, the chair to be filled by a qualified woman.

Under the system of boarding out children who become wards of the State, it is usual to pay a foster mother or allow an institution the sum of five shillings a week for the maintenance of each child, but in the event of a father dying, the natural mother is allowed but two-and-sixpence a week. Just why this great financial distinction should be made in favor of a foster mother when the advantages of a natural mother are perfectly obvious does not appear. However, the women citizens have started an agitation to reform the situation, and place the natural mother upon an equal financial footing with the foster parent.

Street soliciting is a misdemeanor in women only, and a host of other inequalities are now so glaringly unjust that if citizenship for women means anything at all, surely combined action will remedy these defects

of legislation by wiping sex out of the statute books altogether. There is a great work for the women of this new land to do, and as the responsibility of citizenship slowly dawns upon them, they will move in solid ranks toward the goal of absolute equality.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Woman's Vote in Finland.

THE women of Finland occupy a unique position among those of the North lands. When the franchise was granted to them it meant more than merely the power to cast a vote for a given candidate, and thus aid him to a seat in Parliament.

Most extraordinary political conditions prevailed in Finland at that time. Women, although without the vote, had worked shoulder to shoulder with men in every effort made to sustain the degree of liberty and freedom which they enjoyed when Finland became a possession of the Russian Crown.

As time passed Finland was robbed of the Constitution guaranteed in the written pledges of five Czars. Later Russia became involved in the disastrous war with Japan, and still later the empire passed into a state of revolution. Taking advantage of the situation, the Finns demanded the restoration of their Constitution, and, while they were about it, they very wisely asked for a number of reforms not given theretofore.

Besides asking for the reorganization of Parliament, they demanded full and complete suffrage for all adults over twenty-five years of age. Up to that time even male franchise was greatly restricted:—defined chiefly by a property clause which gave as many as twenty votes to individual landowners.

The people were very much in earnest over the matter, so much so that a unique form of demonstration

was carried out. It is doubtful if a similar movement ever took place upon a purely political question, and up to the present no one seems able to explain just how it all came about.

Without plan, system, method, or arrangement, the whole country entered upon a general strike. The Russian capital was as completely shut off from Finland as though it had been located on Mars. Every cog and wheel in the industrial world came to a stop; trains and tramcars seemed frozen to the rails, and all vehicular traffic was suspended. Hotels and business houses shut their doors; and marketing places, for the purchase of food supplies, were open only two hours a day. Drinking shops of all kinds were closed for a month, church bells pealed and rang day and night, bands of musicians paraded the streets, and the forbidden flag of Finland was floated in full view from numerous heights. Children refused to go to school, and marched in the streets singing patriotic songs, and great mass meetings were held in public places at which the speakers loudly clamored for full adult suffrage—men and women upon equal terms. The dawn of the Day of Judgment could not have been more startling.

THE CZAR'S ASSENT.

After the Finnish Parliament had passed the measure—which was carried without a single opposition vote—to grant enlarged franchise to men, and to include women under the same conditions, a leading statesman was commissioned to take the document to Russia for the signature of the Czar.

Whatever that ruler's opinion may have been as to the unwisdom of the measure, with his Empire discredited in warfare before the eyes of the whole world, his subjects in a state of open revolt, and his own life in danger day and night, the Czar could see that the loyalty of Finland was not to be despised. Upon reading the clause in reference to giving the vote to women, his Majesty inquired, "Is that a wise measure?" To this the statesman replied by stating a plain, unvarnished fact: "Your Majesty, there is a general demand for the clause." Enough said! It was signed, and the Constitution was restored to Finland in 1905.

Well, the women were full-fledged citizens when the Commissioner returned to Finland, subject only to the same restrictions by which men were hedged about. Thus, by a stroke of the pen, the voting population was increased from 320,000 to about 1,500,000. Farm hands, factory workers, women, and peasants generally were elevated to the status of "persons and people."

Before the restoration of the Constitution the legislative body was divided into four sections, representing the clergy, the peasantry, the towns and cities, and the nobility. (I would like to point out here that not one of these lifted a voice against the proposition to enfranchise women. I know of scarcely another case in which there was so complete a victory.) Now all the members are elected by popular vote. There is but one Chamber, composed of two hundred members. Women are eligible to seats. The largest number of women representatives at any one time reached twenty-five.

WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT.

In attending the opening of the Finnish Parliament, a short time ago, I saw nothing unusual in the presence of the women among the lawmakers. In fact, they were not by any means an outstanding feature of the gathering. In no way could they have been classified as abnormal. They were not quarantined like pest-stricken persons, but appeared a perfectly normal part of the assembly. The seating arrangements are in sections of two, and the women looked quite at home comfortably seated beside their fellow lawmakers. With the natural ease and grace which distinguishes a lady in the drawing-room, they took their part in national housekeeping with an intelligent dignity which is certainly a credit to womankind. Neither members nor onlookers could say that their presence obtruded itself anywhere.

At present there are fourteen women members. A number of these are peasants representing the rural districts. They are peasants pure and simple, in looks, dress, and general bearing, with far too much intelligence to attempt to be anything else. They represent the nerve and sinew of the country and the development of national resources—a class which should be fully and well represented. But there are not peasant members only; the women have been elected from all classes of society, as well as every shade of political creed, for they are pretty equally distributed among the four parties.

I would like to point out the wonderful advantage these women citizens have over those who have the vote in other parts of the world. Here there are four parties from which a woman may select her candidate.

This gives her a chance to vote for men and measures instead of being bound to a party. In countries like Australia, for instance, where there are but two parties, women have no choice of men. They must either support their party and an objectionable candidate or vote to support a policy with which they have no sympathy. This disadvantage to the Australian women voters should always be taken into consideration in dealing with the results of the use of the vote by women in that country. It is a vital point.

A REFINING INFLUENCE.

To return to the Finnish women members; as stated, they represent all classes. I spent an evening in the beautiful and well-regulated home of a little woman who is a Doctor of Philosophy, is at the head of the Government Bureau of Statistics, and also a member of Parliament. Another woman member also holds the same degree from the local university, in which seven hundred girls are students, three of whom are in the Divinity Department.

There are in Parliament one baroness, two wives of university professors, the head of a large school for girls, a teacher of history in one of the leading schools, also the wives of men widely known in the world of business and commerce in Finland—all of which has clearly raised the tone of the body. This must be the case. It is as impossible to introduce the influence of a number of educated, refined, and cultured women into any sphere without raising the tone of the atmosphere as it would be to introduce a similar number of men of equal standing of culture and intelligence and expect that their presence would be unfelt.

It is perfectly true that there are eleven fewer women in Parliament now than there were in former times. This is due entirely to normal causes, similar to reasons which lead to the dropping out of men members. It must be borne in mind that numbers of the present women members have been re-elected again and again as the candidates of men as well as women electors. Two only have been defeated when standing for re-election, and one of those two candidates was beaten by but three votes. Several suffered from ill-health, the baroness being at the present time in a hospital in Sweden. Others have been unable to adjust their domestic affairs to make regular attendance possible, just as business men frequently decline to stand again owing to pressing personal matters.

I noticed a statement in print the other day to the effect that madness is on the increase in Finland, and also that women have lost their "sweet reasonableness" since they got the vote:—the same time-honored, moss-grown arguments which are brought out as the last struggle of an opponent at bay!

Let us look at the matter of increased madness due to women having the vote. If anyone undertakes a close study of the subject, he will find that in the statistics of every country there is recorded an increase of the number of patients in asylums. This is seen in figures which set forth the numbers of inmates; but if anyone will take the trouble to study the reports of public and private institutions he will also find that a large number of the inmates of asylums are there for some mental difficulty quite apart from madness. Experts in mental diseases are in charge of these institutions, and to get the benefit of their skill patients

are sent there for mental disorders which are not even classified as madness. The patients, in short, are there merely to secure for them the most efficient service.

Many of these reports show also an increasing number of curable patients. Therefore statistics of the numbers of inmates of asylums represent not an actual increase in madness, but a highly developed system of treating all manner of mental diseases by experts.

Figures based upon general statistics, if they are accurately compiled, may be true, but they in no sense represent the full truth of a given situation. Of course there are more people in the asylums in Finland now, just as there are in many other countries; but to dump a world condition at the door of Finland, and calmly declare that "madness has increased since women have been given the vote," merely indicates that some persons who should take up permanent residence in an asylum are still at large. The whole statement is a false representation of the situation, and conveys, probably unintentionally, anything but the true state of affairs.

I find in Finland but ten per cent. of the people are illiterate. It would be a fact if I stated that there is but ten per cent. of illiteracy "since women got the vote," but it would be decidedly a dishonest argument if I used it to illustrate the value of women's vote. This shows the necessity of a "final analysis" before a statement is used for or against any proposition.

CASE OF THE POOR.

One of the poor law officials is stated to have exclaimed, with holy unction, "Oh! if our ladies would only give a little more time to the poor and less

thought to politics!" Now the women of Finland have introduced twenty-nine bills into Parliament, all of which have a direct bearing upon conditions which affect the whole community, as well as dealing with points specially affecting woman's interests. Most of them deal with measures which dump the "case of the poor" as charges upon the women of the land. They deal with maternity insurance, the support of Government midwives, the appointment of women factory inspectors, and the prohibition of the importation, sale, manufacture, and consumption of alcohol.

Of other bills brought in by women, the following have been passed: The right of women to assist in the department of public medicine; the establishment of laws against the ill-treatment of children; the complete freeing of a wife from the guardianship of her husband; the raising of the marriage age of girls from fifteen to eighteen years, and the organization of colonies for youthful criminals.

The women are also dealing with a curious situation, but one which obtains in other countries where women vote. All women who come under the qualifications of male electors may vote for councillors, but are not allowed a seat upon city councils; they may go to Parliament, but to take part in city housekeeping is a battle they must yet win. This is also true in Australia.

It has been stated by a writer upon "Things Finnish" that when the fact of suffrage for women was new they made use of the vote to a greater extent than they have in more recent elections; also that the women vote in rural districts is much smaller. These

are but half-truths when given without the setting. It is a fact that there are fewer votes cast by women in the rural districts, for the simple reason that women are not there to cast them. From these districts of Finland, as elsewhere, there is a constant outflow of the male population seeking homes in a new land. The women are left behind for a longer or shorter period, and frequently must become bread-winners. In search of occupation, they seek the centers of population and swell the ranks of the voting women of the cities, where the woman vote has increased at the ratio equal to that by which it has diminished in rural parts.

A CHAPTER OF HISTORY.

The truth is that the vote in Finland is not what it was. It is a pathetic incident in the struggles of a brave people who feel the heel of oppression bearing upon them with a crushing weight; a weight heavy enough to paralyze all effort and utterly kill all power to act. Perhaps a few lines of history will shed a little light upon the relation of the falling off in the vote of both country and city electors.

When Finland was taken from Sweden, and fell into the hands of Russia, the Czar was made Grand Duke of the country. Alexander I took an oath to respect the independence of Finland. A similar obligation was assumed by the succeeding rulers, including the present Czar. For the last few years the Russian Government has been steadily undermining the constitution which was restored to them in 1905. The possibility of the Finns sustaining and enforcing their own laws seems at present very doubtful. A

recent incident illustrates how fierce the battle is, and how helpless the people are. In one district the High Court recently rendered a decision in a case involving the support of Finnish law. Because of their verdict, the entire court, save the president, was sent to a Russian prison for sixteen months. Not only so, but they were debarred from holding office for ten years in the State or any municipality. One of the judges is seventy years old. The wives and children of these high officials are left entirely unprovided for.

Such acts of oppression are continually taking place. Just men are, one after another, being dragged to prison for performing the duties which they have sworn to undertake. Is it any wonder, then, that electors, men as well as women, become discouraged when they see the only possible channel through which laws may be enforced brought to general wreckage? They grow weary of the farce of sending law-makers up to represent them when there is such little prospect of any power to put the laws into effect.

Yes, women do vote in somewhat fewer numbers than formerly; so do men. But what wonder, when the ballot becomes a farce and laws a burlesque on human liberty? Yet, in the face of these odds, the present percentage of votes cast by the whole of the electors of Finland is somewhat above the average cast in countries where they have full male franchise and normal conditions of freedom. Of the men enrolled upon the register in the last four years the percentage of voters has ranged from 64.9 to 70.5, while during the same period the percentage of women's vote has registered 54.8—60.5.

Whether individual opinion may be in favor of women going to Parliament or not, so long as men voters help to put them there just so long will women members in Finland remain a factor in future legislation with increasing results in helping to work out "the greatest good to the largest number."

CHAPTER IX.

Women Citizens at Work in Norway.

THERE had been much active work done by the women of Norway, while they still had the same sovereign as Sweden, to get the vote, and when at last the franchise did come, it was the natural outgrowth of a national situation. The interest which the Norwegian women themselves took in the question had much to do with the result. When the separation of the kingdoms was effected the fact was recognized, and limited suffrage was granted to the women in 1907.

As all parties are now pledged to support a measure granting full adult suffrage to women, it is certain to become law next year.* The present restriction is a property tax clause. All women over twenty-five who pay a given tax rate, or who are married to men who pay the said amount, have the right to vote; whereas all men over twenty-five, subject to restrictions only in regard to a residential qualification, are full citizens.

Norwegian women have worked just as energetically in the interests of the general good of all sections of the community since they were given the vote as they did to secure the franchise.

The National Council of Women is an organization representing all women's societies in the kingdom. Each body is represented in the council by a given number of delegates. These meet and act for the respective bodies they represent. All matters of

* Since going to press, the measure has passed and the women of Norway have been given the full franchise.

general interest are subjects of discussion, and any special movement becomes part of their platform.

DOMESTIC SCIENCE.

Some time ago they represented to the Government the need of a training school of domestic science, in which teachers going to schools in rural districts could qualify along special lines to meet country requirements. The request represented hundreds of women voters, and was granted. A fine site was selected, the buildings erected, a staff appointed, and the whole place was opened long before the women dared to hope that the promise would become performance. There it stands, on a beautiful hill, a few miles from the capital, with sufficiently extensive grounds to meet all requirements. Girls who qualify for country teaching conclude their preparation by a course in domestic science suited to the rural districts.

The place accommodates somewhat fewer than twenty students. Instruction includes bee-keeping, the care of cattle, milking, butter- and cheese-making, also, poultry-breeding, and the making of jams, preserves, pickles, as well as ordinary economical cooking. It was quite a revelation to me to see such a necessary and really wonderful institution in full operation, and remember that it had never occurred to the men that it was so important a part of rural instruction. Cooking, as taught in State schools, is under the Board of Education, but this training college is under the Department of Agriculture. The only man employed upon the staff is the one who deals with the care of cattle and gives instruction in butter- and cheese-making; otherwise it is carried on by women.

PROTECTING FACTORY GIRLS.

The appointment of a woman factory inspector is also a recent thing, and the results show how impossible it is for men to deal with many phases of girl and woman life in the industrial world. One of the first things the woman inspector did was to carry her inspecting genius beyond the walls where the girls were working to an investigation of the other conditions of their life. This she described to me as perfectly shocking; and an immediate move was made to protect girls from street life and temptation out of working hours.

Women formed themselves into a large deputation and waited upon the city council to discuss the matter of a hostel for factory girls. There are eighty-four members upon the council, nine of whom are women. The women asked for a plot of ground on which to build an hostel. This they asked the council to give outright, which was done. The woman factory inspector had worked out the full cost (every expense in detail), brought with her a plan of the proposed building, and showed that it could be made a profitable business investment, as well as a home for hundreds of girls far away from relatives. It was their purpose to float a women's company and build the house, but when the council saw the details of the proposition it invested to the extent of two-thirds of the cost of the hostel.

CARE OF EMIGRANTS.

The women learned that large steamers were sailing weekly out of Norwegian ports taking hundreds of young people to a new world to make their homes far

from kith and kin. Many of the girls who left were quite alone, and on the voyage must of necessity mingle with all sorts and conditions of men. The situation naturally suggested the need of a matron on board ship, but one was not forthcoming until the women citizens wrote to the shipping company and pointed out the desirability of such a person. This should have been clear to every man who had a daughter. The reply was a striking evidence of how important it is to place womankind generally in a position to command respect and consideration in all reasonable representations. The company not only indicated a willingness to meet their request, but they asked the secretary if the ladies could recommend anyone for the position, and what to their minds would be reasonable compensation for such services. Enough said!

Norwegian women have also been looking into the matter of the percentage of "unfit" among children at birth, and finding that there were no restrictions on marriage short of lunacy, they began an agitation for a bill to prevent the marriage of any unfit person by requiring that both men and women submit to a thorough medical examination before marriage, and that for certain physical weakness or disease men and women alike shall be disqualified for marriage.

These examples show that when women are in a position to make use of their power as citizens there need be no fear that it will be misused, or that their energies will be directed to array women against men.

CHAPTER X.

How the Women of China Became Citizens.

THE enfranchisement of the women of China came as a shock to the world. Dr. Sun Yat Sen, said in his remarkable speech in Chicago, "When a fire-colored flag flies over a Chinese Republic, it will float over a nation of women citizens," no one took him seriously, although his statement met with storms of applause. The doctor knew what he was saying. He knew the situation in the whole of China better than any living man. He knew the forces which had been at work, threading their way through the social fabric and preparing the men as well as the women for the new era upon which the Empire was so soon to embark.

The general opinion was that the women were thrust, wholly unprepared, into a new environment in which they would be too dazed or too ignorant to act; this, however, is quite a mistake. A silent preparation for such an event has been going on for more than a hundred years:—a process which not only qualified women for so great a change, but one which was also preparing men to accept it.

The Chinese have almost a reverence for scholarship. This may be understood by the manner in which preference is given to scholars in all official appointments. No matter how closely related to the nobility a man may be, if those of humble birth outrank him in scholarship, to the latter all preference is given without a moment's hesitation.

When the missionaries entered China they pursued the course usual in other lands and opened schools for girls. It was a wonderful innovation. Up to that time it was generally supposed that girls not only had no brains, but, worse still, they had no use for them. It was a fixed belief in the mind of the average man that women and girls had little capacity to receive instruction. Every possible chance was given to the boys, and most extensive arrangements were made to give them an opportunity to prove their efficiency in letters.

I chanced to be in Canton when some 4,000 students had gathered from districts far and wide to take the examinations which constitute the supreme test for Government service. At that time large numbers of the leading educationalists of China were present. Of several to whom I talked, not a few gave it as their opinion that women really had "receptive minds." One distinguished professor entertained a firm conviction that a nation could never rise until the women were educated.

When the confidence in missionaries was more or less established, girls were allowed to attend their schools. The idea of its being a good thing to educate a girl gradually dawned upon the public mind. The light was long coming. Year by year the results of the training in the missionary schools, more and more demonstrated the ability of the girl mind to receive instruction. The better class of Chinese began to realize that there were real advantages in allowing a girl to acquire knowledge. They also saw that the girls could pursue the same course and system of study followed by the boys with about the same average results.

I would like to say here that whatever individual opinion may be concerning the value of missionary teaching in the Far East, it must be recognized that through their girls' schools they laid the foundation of all progress for womankind throughout the Empire. Not so much, perhaps, in the actual extent of their education, as in establishing and fully demonstrating the fact that girls, Chinese girls, actually could be taught;—that the quality of their mentality was quite equal to that of the gray matter deposited in the masculine cranium. What a revelation it must have been!

It is now somewhat more than a hundred years that the average male has been slowly absorbing that fact. By degrees educated girls have passed through the mission school to the open field for women teachers in the school room as well as in the houses of the common people, instructing in hygiene in the home, domestic science, silk-worm culture and agricultural pursuits.

In visiting some of these schools for girls situated inland, far from the coast, what impressed me most, as I came in close touch with them, was how much less curious they were about what western girls did than anxious to try and understand what they could do.

Thinking men finally saw the advantage of a more extended system of education. In various provinces advancement has been marked and rapid, one district undertaking the stupendous task of erecting five thousand school houses in a year.

The crowning achievement upon educational lines was reached when the Minister of Education of the Chinese Republic made an official announcement that

the future policy of the department would be to let down all bars which had, in the past, obstructed the progress of women and give them an equal chance with men in school advantages. A decree to that effect has been issued, and details of methods by which it will be carried out in the whole Empire are now under consideration.

What this means to the women of China we of the West little understand. Through education woman will come into her own in the home, for she will command a respect which usage has never granted and establish a status heretofore unknown.

While the hundred years of missionary work has worked a change in the ideas and ideals of all girls who have passed through their hand—and I mean this quite aside from the teaching of any religious faith—there have been influences at work among those who have never been brought in contact with educational forces.

The wisdom of Dr. Sen may be seen in his masterly stroke of establishing a press throughout China. The greatest task to which human hand was ever placed was that of organizing the only possible means of a rapid education of 400,000,000 of people. What his genius did to bring the world of progress to the teeming millions of China by placing the newspaper at their very doors no human mind can calculate. This is no form of speech—positively no mind can grasp it.

As a medium by which knowledge could spread and public sentiment become awakened, some of the clever women undertook the newspaper and magazine business, not merely writing, but conducting, the entire enterprise; that the Chinese women might inform themselves concerning other women in other lands.

Scores of such publications seemed to spring up as the natural product of a changed atmosphere, and many of them have a large circulation among women subscribers.

In Pekin, a woman's journal, edited by Madame Chang, the gifted and educated widow of a high government official, is published weekly, and gives detailed accounts of the progress women are making in all parts of the world.

There is still another influence, which to my mind has been the source of a general arrest of thought among the mothers of China. For ages, nobody can estimate the length of time, the better class women were victims of the criminal practice of foot-binding, because men desired, and therefore decreed it. As though it were not enough to be deprived of the advantages of mind development or soul growth, reared in a profound belief of their inferiority to the male sex, existing merely as an evil necessary to perpetuate the race, but with all this, they must be so crippled as to render them almost helpless. Every well-to-do mother was expected to take her little daughter when two years of age and submit her to the torture and cruelty of binding her feet. No matter how much the good sense of the mother might rebel against it, the task was forced upon her. This custom was practiced by the Chinese and scorned by the Manchus. In order to impress the populace that she was in favor of reforms, the old Empress issued a ukas forbidding foot-binding. This, of course, brought an arrest of thought to millions of mothers who had accepted the usage as something that "always had been and always would be." A reform atmosphere was created. Women naturally

began to wonder what it meant. In fact, they began to think. It was the forerunner of physical freedom for the young generation. The shock was so great to the mass that almost the entire Empire " stopped to think about it."

While the act on the part of the Empress was probably prompted as a matter of diplomacy, with little thought of the decree being carried into effect, there can be no doubt that it was the very foundation of advanced thought among women. The generation already in a state of womanhood, for the first time in their lives had been suddenly brought face to face with a situation which compelled them to think.

I well recall having engaged a Chinese woman to travel inland with me when I was about to take a long trip. She was forty-two years of age, full-grown, of course, and her feet were but four and a half inches long. I entreated her to remove the bandages and enjoy the comfort of untrammeled progress. The poor soul told me that her feet had been bound for forty years, the bandages never having been removed except to replace them with clean ones. To dispense with the bandages would incapacitate her completely. No wonder women were confused and bewildered. The seeds of reform took rootage.

Naturally, every one is speculating as to whether or not the Chinese women will " make good " in citizenship. It must be pointed out that the women, although so cruelly oppressed for ages, have never been cowed, suppressed or broken in spirit. They are as brave as any women I have ever lived among, and recent events prove this statement to be correct. This virtue has merely been held in check until an outlet presented

itself. The outlet has arrived, and the women are manifesting their natural courage in a variety of ways, each an expression of individual temperament.

As an illustration, take the young ladies of the school for girls at Chang-Yu. The secretary of these patriotic and enthusiastic maidens wrote to the leaders of the republic when the revolution was in force, offering their services in defense of their country against the Manchus. The appeal concluded by saying: "We wish to have a share with the men of China in crushing out our enemy. Send us arms."

In the south, where the revolution spirit was madly rampant, and whole communities seethed with violence, the girls, three hundred strong, organized themselves into the "Amazon Girls' Corps." Arming themselves with swords, they joined the regular troops. They were denied recognition by the chief commander, who declined to admit them to field service or provide them with equipment. Although they adopted men's shoes of foreign make to conceal their crippled feet, they were too slow of movement to be of service in action.

When the Manchu power fell, and the event was to be fittingly celebrated in all parts of China, almost every city organized a demonstration of one sort or another. In a number of places women arranged their own processions, and with banners, bands and torches gave a public exhibition of their approval of the new order of things.

Militant methods were adopted in but one part of the Empire. Emboldened by accounts of the riotous acts of English women, a goodly number marched to

the Assembly in a body. Entering the chamber, they overturned furniture, vehemently denounced their state of oppression, and demanded full suffrage then and there. A few of the more aggressive exponents of the cause proceeded literally to kick their ideas into the almost distracted members, who, having viewed the proceedings in awed silence, made good their escape. The Assembly moved to the north!

Concerning future events, the women are certain to score at one point at least. In China, as also in England and America, men are decreasing in stature, while women are developing physically at a corresponding degree.

Take a given number of Chinese men and women from the same social stratum, be that what it may, there is no possible doubt but the women could endure the greater degree of physical or nerve strain. This is true of all classes, and is the result of the undermining for generations of the constitutions of men by the long-continued use of opium. High and low, rich and poor, alike indulge in the abundant use of the drug.

During recent investigations into the use of opium it has been estimated that there are about 100,000,000 smokers, 2,000,000 of whom die every year. That means that more than a quarter of the male population are always upon the highway to sure and certain wreckage of both mind and body. I have seen as many as 1,700 smoking under one roof. It is true that the use has greatly diminished the last few years, through the efforts of the Chinese Government in crushing out the cultivation of the native plant, but with the inflow of the drug from the British Empire and the continued

use of it by those confirmed in the habit, it will be at least two generations before the physical manhood of the country will be restored to normal.

Meantime, as in Western lands, girls will continue to develop under universal training in the public school until they, too, will possess greater vitality of both mind and body than their men. The race of the women of China to overtake the men will be an easy one, because so large a percentage of the male population falls below par because of the use of opium, a vice, strange to say, to which women have never become addicted.

Viewing the situation from all sides, the calm, steady progress of the women in their new environment seems pretty well assured. Coming, as it does, with a complete revolution in every relation of life, they will quickly adjust themselves to the responsibility of citizenship as a part of the changed environment in which they now find themselves.

EVERY AMERICAN WOMAN

Should Have Some Remunerative Occupation Establishing Her Independence and Freedom.

A Vital Occupation for Women

The reader of this page can undoubtedly recall the many bitter experiences of friends and acquaintances, because they had to depend on their parents or other relatives for support,—a support sometimes grudgingly given. The question arises: "How can I, with reasonable quickness and certainty, attain the independence I desire?"

The Fletcher Music Method opens to **Women** a road to independence and freedom, mentally and financially.

Dr. Lyman Abbott says of this Method: "She teaches children to think and express themselves in terms of music. She converts it from a blind, mechanical copying into vital self expression. * * * It seems to me more than a method—it is a revolution and converts musical education from a mere drill and drudgery into an inspiration and a life."

Musical Women with a love for children can study this **Method** and will find it offers a happy, refined, protected and remunerative profession.

Over 600 women have already taken up this work, but the field is almost exhaustless and the demand for Teachers growing more rapidly than I can meet it.

The time needed to acquire this **Method** is from eight to ten weeks, consisting of over 200 hours of lectures given by the originator of the Method.

No Instruction is given by Correspondence.

Classes are held in Brookline (Boston), Mass., on October 1st, January 15th and July 1st of each year.

Apply for full particulars to

EVELYN FLETCHER COPP, 31 York Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

Mrs. Copp lectures before Teachers' Associations, Women's Clubs, and other organizations. Applications for lectures should be sent to

WILLIAM B. FEAKINS, 19 West 44th Street

NEW YORK CITY

OCT 6 1913

The Only Woman *Senator* in America

HELEN RING ROBINSON

Senator Robinson

TELLS

"What Women Have Done With the Vote"

IN COLORADO

A New Englander by birth, has lived for so many years in Colorado, that she presents a splendid combination of the time-honored Eastern culture and Western vitality.—*New York Evening Sun.*

A delightfully humorous yet most instructive speech.—*Pittsburgh Press.*

For Terms and Dates apply

WILLIAM B. FEAKINS

19 West 44th Street NEW YORK

THE TRUTH ABOUT FOODS

Is The Most Important Thing for Modern Women to Know

The health of the family, the growth of the child, the welfare of the workers, all depend upon the home-maker's knowledge of foods.

"THE FORECAST," a magazine of Pure Food and Home Efficiency, supplies this knowledge.

It tells its readers what is bad food and how to avoid it as well as what is good food and how to get it.

A year's subscription costs but One Dollar.

THE FORECAST MAGAZINE

Flanders Building, Philadelphia C. Houston Goudiss, Publisher

Mr. Goudiss is open for lecture engagements upon food, sanitation and diet. His subjects cover a wide field and are of popular interest.

For Terms and Dates apply to WILLIAM B. FEAKINS, 19 West 44th Street, New York

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 009 541 563 5